

**For Immediate Release**

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**EQUATORIAL GUINEA LAUNCHES RURAL ROOFING PROGRAM**

*Minister of Agriculture says new Zinc Roofs will Improve Health and Living Standards*

**MALABO, Equatorial Guinea** (May 19, 2011) — The government of Equatorial Guinea has launched a project to replace improve traditional housing by installing zinc roofs on more than 30,000 houses. Roughly 100,000 Equatorial Guineans will benefit from zinc roofs, which will replace traditional roofs made of the fronds of the nipa palm.

The project, which arose as a result of a survey carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, under Minister Teodoro Nguema Obiang, is aimed at upgrading homes in rural areas and will be carried out throughout the national territory.

Zinc roofs last longer than nipa roofs and allow better protection from the elements. Nipa roofs also can harbor rats, insects, and other vermin and can pose a health hazard to residents, particularly children.

"This is an important project that will quickly improve the standard of living in rural areas," said Minister Nguema. "Through efforts like these, Equatorial Guinea is rapidly developing its infrastructure. Improving health and opportunity in rural areas is a top priority for the Ministry of Agriculture. We hope this will serve as an example for other countries to follow.

***About Equatorial Guinea***

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea (República de Guinea Ecuatorial) is the only Spanish-speaking country in Africa, and one of the smallest nations on the continent. In the late-1990s, American companies helped discover the country's oil and natural gas resources, which only within the last five years began contributing to the global energy supply. Equatorial Guinea is now working to serve as a pillar of stability and security in its region of West Central Africa. The country will host the 2011 Summit of the African Union. For more information, visit <http://www.guineaequatorialpress.com>.

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